

that many of the plants from Colorado so referred may rather pertain to the mut. *oinocarpa* (cf. TORREYA, 1904, p. 58) of *S. microbotrys*.

REVIEWS

Catalogue of the Flowering Plants and Ferns of Connecticut*

In the many contributions to the flora of restricted areas one, of two fundamental ideals, must color the whole tone of the work. One of these aims to present a list of all the plants which are known to grow in the area treated and to outline the local distribution of them. Such a work is subjective, a record of facts, and perhaps the only method that can safely be pursued in a preliminary treatment. At its best it is little more than a carefully prepared record of undigested and often indigestible facts.

Contrasted with this necessary but somewhat prosaic concept is the local flora which aims in some measure to *account* for the distribution of the plants in the area treated. A work of this character must digest the records of previous workers, or else begin the accumulation of new ones, and from this point onwards its aims are objective. It is not merely a record of facts but a projector of ideas. It does not confine itself to recording the occurrence of such a plant at such a place, but seeks to unfold the reason of its occurrence at that place and its non-occurrence elsewhere. That in most cases the attempt is an approximation to failure proves nothing, except the desirability of attempting a work, the failure of which postulates a vastly greater contribution to our knowledge of plants, than is conceivable in the most successful works of the old order.

It must be a matter of regret to those interested in local flora work hereabouts, that the recently issued catalog of Connecticut plants must undeniably be placed under the first of these cat-

* Catalogue of the flowering plants and ferns of Connecticut growing without cultivation. Prepared by a committee of the Connecticut Botanical Club. Published as Bull. 14, Conn. Geol. and Nat. Hist. Survey. 1-569 pp. Hartford. 1910.

egories. And it is an unwelcome surprise that a state of the historical antiquity of Connecticut, should not long ago have passed through this necessary, but confessedly preliminary, stage of the mere cataloging of plants and their known points of occurrence.

Taking the work as it is, however, and not as we had hoped it might be, it is a genuine pleasure to record its comprehensive and conservative treatment of the plants of the state. Only such plants are admitted into the list as have been seen by at least one of the members of the committee.* It is, then, certain that the plants listed in the catalog are all to be found in the state.

Much less certain are "some localities, . . . [which] rest upon the authority of collectors alone, when the species is once definitely admitted and there is no reason to doubt identity." While the present generation may be willing to accept such records, as in the majority of cases they are probably perfectly authentic, what must be the attitude of our successors in the work? If it is anything like our attitude towards the work of our predecessors, it will be a fine scepticism towards any station listed for which an accessible specimen is not extant. There is a long list of plants which the authors have excluded from the list on this reasoning, and they have even excluded some weeds of more or less fugitive character. These are all listed in a copious appendix.

From a taxonomic standpoint the work is shot through and through with the traditions of the Cambridge botanists, thus embodying the conservative and reasonable treatment of our eastern plants that is presented in the new Gray manual, so called. Any attempt to review the whole taxonomy of the work is impossible in such a short article but a few points call for comment.

In the genus *Potamogeton* the *P. bupleuroides* Fernald is admitted while the *P. perfoliatus* L. is not credited to the state. Even if one grants the specific validity of this coast segregate of Professor Fernald (which N. Am. Flora denies) what becomes of the inland forms of the *P. perfoliatus* L. as understood in the new sense? Specimens in the herbarium at New York from Litchfield are certainly true *P. perfoliatus* L.

*The gentlemen who have prepared this work are C. B. Graves, E. H. Eames, C. H. Bissell, L. Andrews, E. B. Harger, and C. Weatherby.

Under *Allium* more information would have been welcome under *A. canadense* L. Judging from our collection it is scarcely so common as to merit the remark, "Frequent." In the same family the inclusion of the genus *Hosta* is surprising, as both of the two species listed are usually only very doubtfully established escapes. Throughout the work there are many plants of this character included within the regular list. From the standpoint of the completeness of the record this is necessary, but it would have added to the general consistency of the work to have printed them in some distinguishing type, so that they might at a glance have been separated from the legitimate elements in the wild flora of the state.

The omission of *Quercus borealis* Michx. f. from the list is surprising, in view of the fact that all our best specimens of this plant come from Connecticut. It would be easy to multiply instances of this sort, but they are, for the most part, referable to differences of botanical parentage, and not therefore subjects which come within the scope of a short review. As the name of the work indicates it is a catalog and the lack of descriptions is not a very serious omission, but the introduction of keys would have almost trebled the value of the work to the general run of its users. Under most of the species there are notes on the economic or cultural uses of the plant. While these are interesting they have the tang of the book and candle rather than that of the botanically unsophisticated. And the space they take up would have been very acceptably filled with keys.

As a point of departure for future work on Connecticut this list will be a landmark and a bulwark. The care and devoted labors of the authors have been the means of making an invaluable record of the plants and their distribution. As such it is most welcome and the Connecticut Botanical Club is to be congratulated upon the completion of a book that will serve as a basis for all future work.

The appendix requires brief notice. It contains, besides a copious index, a list of corrections and additions, "Native plants not found in recent years", "Excluded species", "Fugitive species", "Statistical Summaries", and a list of botanical authors cited in

the body of the work. Much of this matter requires a great amount of labor and the clearing up of many of the points still in doubt will serve as a stimulus to the club in its future studies on the flora of Connecticut.

The book is a well printed volume of 596 pages, the thickness of which makes it a trifle bulky.

NORMAN TAYLOR

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLUB

MARCH 30, 1910

The meeting was held in the museum building of the New York Botanical Garden, beginning at 3.30 P. M. Vice-president Barnhart occupied the chair. Seventeen persons were present.

The minutes of the meeting of March 8 were read and approved.

Professor J. C. Arthur, Dr. John Hendley Barnhart, and Professor Alexander W. Evans were elected delegates to the Third International Botanical Congress to be held in Brussels, May 14th to May 22d, 1910.

First on the announced scientific program was a discussion of "Exploration in Andros" by Dr. J. K. Small. An abstract of this follows :

"Recent exploration of the botanically little-known parts of Andros, Bahamas, carried on by the New York Botanical Garden, brought to light plants not only new to the flora of Andros itself, but also to the flora of the Bahamas. In order to carry out the plans made previously to entering the field, seven bases were selected along the eastern coast of the island, namely, Deep Creek, Smith Hill, Crow Hill, Lisbon Creek, Fresh Creek, Staniard Creek, and Nicholl's Town. The vessel was left at these points while the party, consisting of Mr. J. E. Aranha of the Surveyor General's Office of the Bahamas, Dr. J. K. Small, and Mr. J. J. Carter, together with such members of the vessel's crew as were needed, made excursions inland. Excursions were made on the one hand as far as it was possible to go on foot and on the other by a small boat to the headwaters of most of the creeks mentioned above.

"The topography of Andros is comparatively simple, and the